

## **Woodland Phlox**

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Woodland phlox, *Phlox divaricata*, also known as wild sweet William, is a shade-loving perennial that produces lavender blue five-petaled flowers in spring. It has a wonderfully long bloom season. In my garden, it has been sending out flowers for a solid month now.

Woodland phlox does best under trees in soils rich in humus. The plant naturalizes, gradually spreading into empty spaces when stems touching the ground root. At just 12 inches in height, the spread is not aggressive, knitting in around other shade lovers like hosta and Solomon's seal. Mulch plants with a 2-4 inch layer of wood chips to keep soil evenly moist and water during extended periods of dryness.

Woodland phlox is an outstanding plant for pollinators, providing pollen and nectar early in the season when food sources can be scarce. While deer don't read the list of plants they won't eat, woodland phlox is not a preferred food source for them.

Woodland phlox is readily found at garden centers and through catalog companies. This lovely wildflower is included on the list of pollinator plants found here: <http://go.unl.edu/pollinatorhabitat> .